DEVELOPING POLICY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The ‘call to action’ by school children and high school students around the world over Climate Change reflects the limitations of current public policy mechanisms to address intergenerational issues. Present day decision-makers look upon the world with largely a short-term perspective; influenced by opinion polls, quarterly reporting, executive performance incentives, peer and popularity pressures. Without consideration for future generations, stewardship of our planet will fail. In this context, IVHL launched 'The Value of Future Life' project at the University of Cambridge Department of Engineering’s Sustainable Development Programme with the goal of developing a tool to assist decision-makers to understand better the impact of present-day decisions upon future generations.

WHO WE ARE

The Initiative to Value Human Life (IVHL) is a non-profit organisation founded to:

- Understand how lives are measured and valued for public policy purposes
- Bring transparency to the process of valuing a human life
- Facilitate discussion with practitioners on approaches and methodologies
- Improve processes and understand where ‘gaps’ may exist
- Develop learning tools and applications so that institutions and organisations may better value lives and allocate resources, and so individuals can better articulate their self worth and empathise with others
The Basel Peace Forum is a Swiss initiative to further peacebuilding through innovation. IVHL were proud to be a pavilion partner at the 2019 meeting. The event ran from the 13th-14th of January at the Congress Center in Basel. Swiss National Radio interviewed our founder, Robert Sadleir, for 'Echo Der Zeit', the daily news program. A link to the interview can be found in the media section on our website: www.ivhl.org

"Rethinking peace - innovating the future."
In January, IVHL participated at the Basel Peace Forum 2019 in Switzerland where we presented our approaches to Peace-building and Conflict Management and asked: 'Can civilian deaths in conflict zones be reduced by valuing lives better?'

For the forum, IVHL developed a card game to create a discussion on how life can be valued by different measures such as income, or quality of life years, and external factors such as the environment. The list was not exhaustive but we hoped it enabled people to reflect on: "How do I measure the value of my life and the lives of others?"
HUMAN URGENCY AND HUMAN VALUE

In September, IVHL and the Braillard Architectural Foundation co-hosted a roundtable discussion on ‘Human Urgency and Human Value’ at Les Bergues des Vessy in Geneva, Switzerland which explored the connection between urbanisation and humanitarianism. This was part of the ‘Urgence Humanitaire - Se déplacer et vivre’ exposition.

The world is going through a period of rapid urbanisation: cities are perceived as engines of growth, harnessing knowledge networks and investment to create economic opportunities. Yet, this creates a competition for space among inhabitants. At the same time, the number of forcefully displaced people has reached 65 million worldwide, creating a weakening sentiment towards humanitarian action. Both inhabitants of rapidly urbanising cities and displaced people have a commonality: the provision of shelter. The cost of urban housing is rising steeply, partly due to population pressures and also because shelter is no longer perceived as a basic need, but an asset to generate wealth. Competition for shelter creates insecurity, generating hostility towards migrants and asylum seekers. This was the context for our discussants from the humanitarian sector, architecture, building design and IT. Speakers observed that human urgency and human value required understanding both at an individual and the collective level. Moreover, the collective responsibility lay not just with governments but also with communities.

A representative of UNHCR’s Global Shelter Cluster suggested reframing the way we perceive refugee camps. Rather than seeing them as a burden to local authorities and communities, they could be viewed as proto-cities or knowledge networks that could generate growth in regional areas. Technology, and particularly mobile technology had a role to play here in ‘closing the gap’ between displaced communities and host countries: particularly given the need to focus on education and literacy for refugee children.
AFGHANISTAN CASE STUDY

This case study takes an exploratory look at the ways in which sustained periods of conflict impact upon the value of future lives. Afghanistan has been in various forms of conflict for over 40 years and this case study provides insight into these issues. The immediacy of war is captured in the media and the direct impact upon the well-being of citizens can be seen through loss of life, injuries, anxiety and trauma, migration and internal displacement. What is neglected is understanding the impact of war on future generations and how this leads to a continuous cycle of conflict.

The World Bank Human Capital Index, for instance, shows an Afghan student only has 4.9 years of education compared to 11-12 years for students in OECD countries. How does the loss of school years impact upon their lives and their ability to contribute to a post-conflict society?

Loss of school years limits career opportunities, potential earnings and gender equality; it also reduces the likelihood that younger generations are able to effectively participate in creating a post-conflict society and designing institutions needed to build a nation. In short, it makes them less able to be stakeholders in their own future well-being.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CONSULTING PROJECT

As highlighted on the front page, IVHL commenced a consulting research project in January with the University of Cambridge MPhil in Engineering for Sustainable Development, to develop a tool to assist public policy decision-makers to consider the impact of present-day policy upon future generations.

The Cambridge consulting team: Morgan, Martina, and Tobias are pictured left. Our next step is to identify decision-makers to partner with IVHL to test and develop the tool.
HOW DO YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE?: AN INTERVIEW

IVHL is always searching for new perspectives and voices to feature in our newsletter. In this edition, our interviewee is Antonio Quaglio, a chef from Italy who recently visited London to help cook for the BAFTAs, and has also cooked for the Sheikh of Dubai!

What three things do you value most about your life?

My relationships, my health, and having new experiences.

What do you value in another person?

Their ability to express their point of view and their way of thinking without invading/disrespecting my own.

How would you want to be valued by other people?

I like to be seen as someone who does not make your day worse than it already is. If someone is happy (or at least not unhappy) to see me on an early Monday morning shift, I see it as a victory!

How does your job celebrate or value the lives of others?

I work as a cook, and sometimes I can see I have left a mark on someone through the love I put in my work. I once cooked a dish for a young kid and he was so impressed that he told me it was the best he had ever had in his life and he wanted to take a picture with me! It lets me put a smile on people's faces even if it is just for a short time.

Name: Antonio Quaglio
Country: Italy
Occupation: Chef

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING OUR NEXT INTERVIEWEE?

IVHL is always thrilled to hear from our readers! If you'd like to have your input on how you value your life be featured in our newsletter, email us at contact@ivhl.org with your name, location and occupation!

(We'll be sure to respond shortly!)
MEET OUR TEAM

Robert Sadleir  Eric Genoud  Madaline Keros  Jaspreet Singh

Ehab Sakran  Lazaros Anastasiadis  Dea Jusufi  Claire Lengaigne

Marcus Matthews  Jamie Morrad  Debra De Silva-Sun  Sophie Huang

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